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Chap. E 510
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *February, 1865.*

DEAR SIR:

The undersigned, natives of Louisiana, and resident citizens of that State for many years, and never at any time disloyal or indifferent to the interests of the Government of the United States, but always supporting the same to the best of their ability, believing that the observations upon the present condition of Louisiana, presented in the enclosed pamphlet are substantially correct and just, respectfully request your candid consideration of the representations therein made.

R. KING CUTLER,
CHARLES SMITH,

U. S. Senators elect from Louisiana.

M. F. BONZANO,
R. W. TALIAFERRO,
W. D. MANN,
T. M. WELLS,
A. P. FIELD,

Representatives elect from Louisiana

*W. J. Polk and
dear*

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRESENT CONDITION OF LOUISIANA.

In order justly to comprehend the basis upon which the government of the people is established in Louisiana, it is necessary to consider the changes which have taken place in those elements of social and political power which enter into the business and bosoms of men, control in an eminent degree public opinion, and afford a rational, substantial, and permanent basis of government.

I. The primal and general object has been, to show the people that they could live under the Government of the United States, and that they could not live without it. To those who have been loyal to the Union in act as well as words, the utmost favor has been shown; to others, none. Permits, passes, or privileges of any kind beyond the lines have not been given by military authority, except where the government interests were involved.

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II. The sanitary condition of New Orleans, and the health of the army in the south-west, is worthy of consideration in connection with public affairs. The yellow fever has not appeared in New Orleans since it was occupied by the Government. As epidemics have been periodical, a temporary relief from this scourge would not be remarkable, but it is now more than five years since any contagion has occurred. Among the causes that have produced this change, the sanitary reforms cannot be disregarded. The quarantine regulations have been rigidly enforced, except against vessels of war. The population is constantly employed. The dwellings of the poor have been thoroughly inspected and materially improved. The sale of unseasonable and injurious market products, is prohibited. The military and civil police has been used for suppression of disease as well as crime. The system of canalization for purposes of drainage has been extended and completed. Canals, originally from four to six feet in depth, which had been filled to the depth of two or three feet, have recently been excavated to the depth of eight or ten feet, affording perfect drainage to the entire city. This has been done without expense to the Government or the people. In addition to the sanitary measures already completed, nothing is required but the construction of reservoirs on the bank of the Mississippi, by which its waters may be used to cleanse the streets and strengthen the current of the canals leading to Lake Ponchartrain, to render it one of the purest and healthiest cities of the globe. The effect of these measures has been such as to banish epidemics. Vessels bringing yellow fever from the military posts on the gulf coast, have anchored for two months in the river in front of the city, without imparting the disease to its population. Excavations of earth heretofore prohibited during the summer months, have been continued this season without detriment to the public health. The troops of Louisiana are as healthy as any portion of the army. Not more

than four in a hundred of the men in service are sick on the average, and these mostly from diseases incidental to exhaustive labors. The public importance of this sanitary improvement cannot be overlooked. It is scarcely to be doubted that epidemics have been tolerated heretofore from political considerations. The expulsion of yellow fever, and the abolition of slavery, open the lower valley of the Mississippi to emigration from every part of the world, and the new population cannot fail to place its institutions and its policy in harmony with the spirit of the age.

III. In the churches, Christian recognition of the cause of the Government is made, according to the usages of the different religious denominations. The course of Catholic churches in regard to the Government is essentially the same as in the Northern States. In all Protestant churches prayers for the President and Congress are offered. In many churches, national discourses are pronounced, the successes of the national arms gratefully remembered, and the flag of the Union reverently honored. The attendance of the people upon religious worship is general. The days of thanksgiving and fasting are voluntarily observed by general suspension of business and the usual church services. From small beginning this Christian influence has become general, and will strengthen with the success of the Government.

IV. Public and private schools have been placed upon the same basis of loyalty to the Government. Instruction is given upon the character of our institutions and the objects of the war. The national flag is honored, and the national anthems are sung at every session. The general influence of schools, committees, visitors, teachers,

pupils, studies, and pleasures, is of the most patriotic character. Private schools are required to conform to this principle, except a few long established religious schools. There are ten thousand white children in the public schools, and three thousand in private schools in New Orleans, and probably two thousand in the country parishes. These fifteen thousand children, filled with the spirit of loyalty by studies, associates, and sports, influence every family circle, participate in all public celebrations, and make school-rooms, streets, play-grounds, and homes, resonant with their joyous national spirit. A normal school for instruction of teachers is in progress, and a successful experiment has been made by loyal women in establishing "Ragged Schools."

V. About one hundred and twenty day schools, sixty Sabbath schools, and twenty night schools for adults, have been established in the last two years for the instruction of negroes. Every colored regiment has a teacher attached to the staff of the commander, and an organization in the nature of a school for instruction in the elements of English education. Nine thousand negro children attend permanent day schools, and half as many attend Sabbath and night schools. The success of the schools is beyond expectation. Reports from the day, night, sabbath and regimental schools have been satisfactory to the friends of the negro race. The new constitution authorizes the legislature to extend the right of suffrage to negroes of general intelligence, who pay taxes, or have served in the army.

VI. The courts of the State have been reorganized in such a manner as to recognize the principles of emanci-

pation in all judgments. A negro is recognized as witness or suitor in all the courts, as white men are. The principles of the common law in regard to the custody of children have been uniformly recognized by the courts. A negro mother, though formerly a slave, when capable of maintaining her child, is entitled to its possession by the decrees of the courts upon proof of the fact.

VII. Agricultural industry since January, 1863, has been established upon the basis of absolute emancipation, recognizing the entire freedom of the laborer, and securing to him a compensation at least equal to that paid to labor of a like character in any part of the country. The success of the system does not depend upon the opinions of men. It is in the nature of things. If thoroughly tested, with such modifications as experience may suggest, it will not only establish industrial freedom upon a permanent basis, satisfactory to all parties, but lead to an early abolition of slavery in Cuba and Brazil.

VIII. All the business relations of the State are placed upon the same basis of nationality. A man who has merely taken the oath receives no favor on that account from the military authorities. He is required to show that he represents the spirit of the oath in his daily walks of life; that he pursues some laudable industrial vocation, and actively assists the Government of the United States in maintaining its authority and extending its influence over all the people of the State. Neither the oath of allegiance, nor the amnesty oath, has been regarded by the military authorities as entitling a person to special recognition, except it be accompanied by some manifesta-

tion in favor of the Government, and an active support of its authority.

IX. Of the elements of social or commercial influence, active or inactive, which manifest sympathy for rebellion, but one remains—the financial corporations. A commission has already been appointed, which has made a thorough investigation of all the affairs of these establishments, and measures are in progress which will place them actively on the side of the Government.

X. In 1863, it was published in every journal, and announced in the principal sales-rooms of the city, that the currency of the city banks only would be taken in payment for goods sold. This has been so far changed by appropriate measures as to place the currency of the United States at a premium, and establish the credit of the national banks, above that of local corporations. The same policy will give to the Government whatever political advantages may be derived from control of the currency and an established public credit.

XI. The church, the school, the counting-room, the social circle, places of amusement, public celebrations, are openly on the side of the Union, and give to the aggregate public sentiment a power that governments cannot otherwise impart. They represent in an aggregate form the moral force of individuals, families, society, and the State.

XII. There is no portion of the country where social influences are more absolutely on the side of the Union than in New Orleans. The intercourse of the loyal people is general, constant, and cheerful. It is apparent to a stranger that this element of power, heretofore so potential in the South as well as in the capital of the nation, is for the Government. All the elements that were used for its overthrow are now applied to its restoration. Women, it is said, have more strength in their tears than men in their threats, and greater power in their looks than men in their laws. When the history of the rebellion is written, it will accord to the loyal women of Louisiana as much honor for their labors in the cause of liberty and union, as southern leaders have given to disloyal women for their support of treason and rebellion.

XIII. The national airs are every night performed at the theatres, and the flag of the Union appropriately honored. Persons inimical to the Government are excluded from the companies, and those of pronounced loyalty, receive the applause once given the enemies of the Republic. The cause of the country, the flag of the Union, the heroes of the army and navy, the measures of emancipation, elicit the applause of heart and hand.

XIV. Nearly ten thousand white soldiers have been enlisted in Louisiana regiments, or in the regiments of other States, in New Orleans, and from fifteen to eighteen thousand colored troops have been armed. Wherever the army has been it has found people willing to engage in the service of the country. One regiment of refugees and deserters from the rebel army has been organized for the defence of New Orleans, and nearly six hundred men

were enlisted as scouts in Rapides and adjoining parishes, while the army held Red river the present year. The families of soldiers are undisturbed in possession of suitable dwellings, independent of the decisions of courts of law, and are assisted by the commissary department when necessary. The military organization of negro troops in Louisiana has received the attention of "*Le Moniteur Universel*" of France, and the unreserved approval of the "*Annales de l'Institut d'Afrique*" of Paris, a journal devoted to the elevation of the African race.

XV. Louisiana has contributed to the military operations which have resulted in the freedom of the Mississippi, the occupation of important military posts on the gulf coast from the Rio Grande to Florida, and shared in as many severe battles as any other portion of the army of the United States.

XVI. The Fire Department, numbering about 1,200 members, a year and a half since recognized as of doubtful loyalty, if not on the side of the rebellion, has been so far reformed that the chief engineer, himself formerly an officer of the rebel army, has, by a public and official statement, declared that the Government might rely with entire confidence upon the officers and men of his command, for an intelligent and faithful performance of all the duties of citizens as well as firemen, and that in this respect the Government of the United States should not be disappointed.

XVII. Upwards of ten thousand loyal voters, with the name and residence of each, are registered in the parish of

Orleans alone, and nearly six thousand votes were polled on the 5th of September, in an election without opposition, affording the best evidence of the interest of the voter in the cause he represented. Seven thousand was the average vote of New Orleans for ten years, and ten thousand the largest vote ever given. From fifteen to eighteen thousand loyal voters are registered under the iron-clad oath within the lines of the army, of whom eleven thousand five hundred voted on the 22d of February, 1864.

XVIII. The popular elections are a fair representation of the people of the State. No just comparison can be made upon the statistics of population in 1860. Four years of war have greatly reduced it. The population of Louisiana is less than five hundred thousand souls. More than forty thousand able-bodied men have been forced into the rebel army from Louisiana alone. These were mostly from the voting classes, immediately interested in the success of the rebellion as a political measure. The entire voting population within and beyond the lines is not over twenty-five thousand, of which seventeen or twenty thousand would be a maximum vote, under any possible circumstances. The registered loyal voters are equal to the first number.

XIX. The political clubs, which number about 5,000 members, embrace the greater part of the middle-aged men of all classes, who are solemnly pledged to the support of the most liberal measures adopted for the restoration of the Union, and the present State government.

XX. The Government is not sustained in any State with more vigor or ability by the public journals than in

Louisiana. The "*Delta*," "*Era*," "*Times*," and "*Pickayune*"—all daily papers of the first class—are earnest supporters of the Union, and have sustained the State government. The "*Bee*," a French paper, admitted to its columns during the election articles in favor of the organization of a State government. A tri-weekly paper in New Orleans, devoted to the interests of the colored people, and several local papers in the country parishes, all sustain the Government. These journals are all ably conducted and well sustained by the people, and give to the Government all the support which can be derived from the widely extended and powerful influence of the public press.

The influence of such measures cannot be too much considered. A government supported by them is founded upon a rock. The loyalty of its people is the result of a daily life in which pursuits, prosperity, and pleasures shape public sentiment. Christian faith is kept alive in the minds of multitudes by the constant recurrence of Christian ceremonies and customs. It requires a soldier, a missionary, and an administrator to found a colony, civilize a barbarous country, or reclaim a rebel State. It is by such agencies that other nations have established their power. They represent the army, the church, and the State. They are all at work in Louisiana for the Union. The Government of the United States is equal to this duty and is not exempt from this law. The privileges it concedes, if abused, can be at any time recalled. There is little danger in making an experiment. It is improbable that the rebel leaders who have by such unparalleled crimes destroyed the South, can ever return to power, or control the opinions even of their own people, whom they have led to destruction, against the combined influence of the armies and administration of the Government and people of the United States.

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The recognition by the Government of a State whose people in good faith declare to the Union, voluntarily abolish slavery, and adopt measures that will secure to all classes the speedy and permanent enjoyment of that equality of rights asserted by the Declaration of Independence, will diminish the dangers of foreign complication incident to civil war on this continent, and hasten the advent of general domestic peace. If this welcome result is secured in any rebel State, its beneficent influence is certain of immediate and wide extension. In no part of the continent can such results be more satisfactorily attained than in the valley of the Mississippi.

It should never be forgotten that Louisiana is its natural outlet to the markets of the world and the only one that can meet the gigantic demands of its future productive power and population. New England and the Middle States; the great central republics of the Missouri, the Upper Mississippi, and the Ohio; the rising States of the Pacific coast, are equally interested in maintaining the power of the Government at the mouth of this valley by winning the affection of its people, as well as by the success of our arms. "Peace hath her victories, no less renowned than war." The conquerors of the world, whose sole object has been subjugation, have never failed to avail themselves of such means in perpetuating the victories won by force of arms. Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon practiced in the zenith of their power the maxim of the great master of human nature for the government of conquered States:—

"When lenity and cruelty play for a kingdom,
The gentler gamester is the soonest winner."





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